

REMARKS

At paragraph 3 of the above-identified Office Action, the Examiner acknowledged the existence of allowable subject matter in Claims 7, 21, 35 and 48, but rejected the remaining claims in view of the cited Lund patent, or a combination of the Lund and Fujii patents. By this response, however, all of the independent Claims 1, 15, 29, and 42, have been amended to stress their patentable distinctions over the cited references. Accordingly, those claims and the remaining claims which depend therefrom, are believed to be allowable.

Particularly, Claim 1 has been amended to stress that the preliminary ejecting operation provides for an ejection of ink which is decreased below a normal value for ink ejection, except for instances when the print head is at a predetermined position, such as a home position. The advantages of this specific feature, in both function and result, are discussed at length in Applicants' specification.

Applicants respectfully submit that this claimed feature of their invention is not suggested by the Lund patent. To be sure, Lund refers to the "spitting" of the ejection nozzles, but does not disclose in any way an ejection which is decreased from a normal value. Moreover, the Fujii patent does not overcome this deficiency of Lund as a rejecting reference. Accordingly, amended Claim 1 and all of its dependent claims are believed to be allowable.

Similarly, independent method Claim 29 and its dependent claims are believed to be patentable for the same reasons set forth above with respect to Claim 1.

Independent Claim 15 provides for a similar apparatus, but relies on a decreased value of optical density obtained from a pigment concentration of the ink for the preliminary ejecting operation, and varies that quantity in relation to the off time of the printer. Again, Lund and Fujii fail to suggest any such structure, or any method related thereto as set forth in Applicants' independent Claim 42. For these reasons, Claims 15 and 42, as well as their dependent claims, are believed to be allowable.

For all of these various reasons, a formal Notice of Allowance is respectfully solicited.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,


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